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PERSONAL EXPERIENCE MONOGRAPH

THE 3D BATTALION 27TH INFANTRY IN OPERATION JUST CAUSE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID S. HUTCHISON
United States Army

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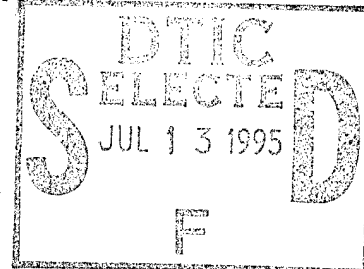
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THE 3D BATTALION 27TH INFANTRY

IN

OPERATION JUST CAUSE

by

Lieutenant Colonel David S Hutchison

United States Army

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Project Adviser

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May 1992

U.S. Army War College

Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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INTRODUCTION

I commanded the 3d Battalion 27th Infantry (3-27), Wolfhounds, of the 7th Infantry Division (Light) during Operation Just Cause. My battalion was in the 2d Brigade of the 7th Division which was the Division Ready Brigade (DRB-1) for the deployment to Panama. My battalion was the Division Ready Force (DRF-1) and in early December of 1989 the Battalion was deployed to Camp Pendleton, California on an emergency deployment readiness exercise (EDRE). We were still in the process of redeploying from the EDRE to Camp Pendleton when the alert for Just Cause was received.

It is the purpose of this paper to relate some of my experiences with the Battalion during its alert and deployment to Panama, as well as one particular type of operation that the Battalion executed several times during Just Cause. It is not the purpose of this paper to develop a unit history from my point of view. This paper will not be that complete. I will try to focus on a few particular experiences which I believe have some value, and that other commanders can learn from. I will offer recommendations with that purpose in mind.

DEPLOYMENT

The alert for Operation Just Cause arrived on 19 Dec 89 at 0900 in the form of a message from Division Headquarters through the Brigade Headquarters. This type of message was called a Blue Bayonet action message and signified a real world deployment was going to take place. An interesting aspect of the deployment was

that it was portrayed as an EDRE to Ft Bragg. I later assumed this was for OPSEC purposes. It may have helped with OPSEC, but it caused other problems.

As I mentioned earlier, the Battalion was in the process of redeploying from an EDRE to Camp Pendleton, CA. The majority of the Battalion had returned by bus to Ft Ord on 15 and 16 Dec. The remainder of the unit, which was composed of approximately 35 vehicles with drivers and vehicle commanders (TCs), and 8 pallets with pallet guards, was scheduled to return to Travis AFB, CA by C-141 on 18 Dec. However, the situation in Panama and for the 7th ID (L) developed rapidly on 18 Dec.

When the Battalion deployed on the EDRE, another unit moved up to be the DRF-1. Upon our return from the EDRE we became the DRF-5 which meant that the Battalion was no longer aligned with 2d Brigade, our parent Brigade. Even though I was no longer the DRF-1, my S-3, Major Dan Fey, and I were ordered to a meeting in the Division emergency operations center (EOC) on the morning of 18 December. We were informed, along with the rest of the personnel assembled, that the Division was going to participate in an EDRE to Ft Bragg. The DRB-1 (2nd Brigade) would deploy, but the day of deployment was not known. Information on assembly areas for use after arrival was provided, the weather was briefed (cold and snow were forecast for Ft Bragg) and we were told that ammunition procedures would be exercised to include the deployment of live ammunition.

At the meeting in the EOC, I was asked by the Commanding

General of the Division if I would be capable of deploying as the DRF-3 with the rest of 2nd Brigade. I said I could, as long as the rest of my people and equipment arrived back from Camp Pendleton on schedule. The Brigade Commander supported my opinion and that issue was solved. I made that decision without knowing where we were going; the Division Commander and the Brigade Commander knew we were going to Panama. If I had known where we were going, my decision would have been the same, but my sense of urgency about recovering my unit from the Camp Pendleton mission would have been greatly increased. As it was, we were refitting and conducting maintenance at a normal pace. It was also close to the start of the Christmas leave period and people were already starting to depart on leave. One platoon leader and approximately 15 other soldiers, including the NCO who had been acting as my rear detachment commander, departed on leave before the decision to stop all leave was made.

After the initial briefing on the 18th, we began planning for the "EDRE" to Ft Bragg. We had a brief command and staff meeting to disseminate information. In summary, I basically transmitted the message I had received from the Brigade Commander:

1. This was a very important EDRE with XVIII Airborne Corps; there should be no speculation about what we were going to do; it was an EDRE to Ft Bragg.

2. With a new Corps Commander, the Division and Brigade wanted to put their best foot forward.

3. The Division and Brigade Commanders wanted to deploy the 2d Brigade as an organic unit; we were now the DRF-3.

The afternoon of the 18th I attended a meeting at Brigade HQs. It was at this meeting that many of the details for the deployment were worked out. The Battalion was allocated 6 C-141's for movement. We selected the ammunition pallets we wanted for deployment, again without actually knowing where we were going. We were told that sleeping bags would not be needed in rucksacks and that they should be palletized. The Brigade Commander explained that they would be moved to us when we needed them. In retrospect, these points and others indicated that we were not really going on an EDRE to Ft Bragg, but at the time the information was presented it was all very plausible. I believed we were going on an EDRE.

One decision that I would have made differently was the selection of transportation for the medics. I was told to bring a medical vehicle and selected a soft top HMMWV because it had a radio in it, and it could carry more equipment. If I had known the Battalion was going to war, I would have taken an actual ambulance, as opposed to a medical command and control vehicle. The ambulance has the hardened top and that protection could have been very important to us. As it turned out, the soft top HMMWV served us very well throughout the deployment.

At that same meeting we discussed leave procedures. The Brigade commander recommended canceling leaves and pulling people out of Ft Ord training schools. Again, the importance of

the EDRE was the reason. The Brigade Adjutant said that all separate rations would be stopped when we deployed. This struck me as strange, but I did not question it.

After the meeting on the 18th at Brigade HQs, I learned that the C-141's that were supposed to bring our vehicles and pallets back to Travis AFB were diverted for another mission. The vehicles and pallets would be transported as soon as aircraft became available, and we were not given a projection of when that would happen. I discussed the situation with the Brigade Commander and recommended that the vehicles convoy to Ft Ord first thing in the morning with the pallets to follow as soon as aircraft were available. I needed the drivers and vehicle commanders more than I needed the vehicles because we were only deploying ten vehicles. However, our key command and control vehicles were also needed. The Brigade commander approved and the convoy arrived at Ft Ord around 1700 hours on the 19th. Personnel riding in the convoy were obviously pressed for time. They barely had time to park their vehicles and repack for the deployment. Most of them did not go home. It was to the credit of several lieutenants and NCOs, using initiative and sound judgement, that the convoy arrived in a timely manner and with minor maintenance problems. The pallets never returned to Ft Ord, but deployed direct to Panama and eventually caught up to us about a week into the operation.

The alert came at 0900 on the 19th and I attended the N+2 meeting with Major Fey at the Division EOC. The deployment was

still portrayed as an EDRE and bus schedules to Travis AFB and aircraft departure times were now briefed. The Battalion spent the day going through the N-Hour sequence. It was not that difficult because we had just done it for the EDRE to Camp Pendleton. The S-3 Air left for Travis AFB late in the afternoon and the S-3 and I rode a bus with the DRF-1 unit to Travis so that we would get up there ahead of our unit. When we arrived at the passenger (PAX) holding area I learned for the first time where we were really going. LTC Herb Harback, the commander of the Departure Airfield Control Group (DACG), told me we were headed to Panama.

Major Fey and I immediately went from the PAX holding area to the EOC at the airfield. The Division and Brigade Commander were there and we got a quick briefing on what was happening. It was 2200 hours in California and 0100 hours on the 20th in Panama, almost exactly the time for H-Hour. We were told that the Ranger Regiment and a Brigade from the 82nd Airborne Division were jumping into various locations in Panama. The plan was for the 2d Brigade to follow these units; land at Torrijos-Tocumen Airport and move to an assembly area. The Brigade S-3 then drew some assembly areas on a map and we copied them. This was the extent of the Brigade's initial OPORD.

Also at this briefing, we were informed that the Battalion would not deploy from Travis AFB. Because of fog at Travis, aircraft could not land to pick us up so we would have to deploy from Monterey Airport. The S-3 Air had already turned around our

vehicles that were at Travis and he had kept one to take us back to Ft Ord. We promptly returned to Ft Ord.

We arrived back at Ft Ord at approximately 0200 hours. By then the word had been disseminated on our destination. The atmosphere had changed, it was electric and even though it was in the middle of the night people were wide awake. We had a brief command and staff meeting in the Battalion conference room and I put out as much information as was available. We published a brief fragmentary order (FRAGO) which now had pertinent information on the mission. (See Annex 1.) We had a Battalion formation at 0400 hours and I put out information that the Division Commander wanted disseminated to every soldier prior to departure. These instructions concerned rules of engagement, guidance on conduct and some key Spanish phrases. Finally I told soldiers to rely on their training, obey their leaders and watch out for their buddies.

We immediately began boarding cattle cars for the airport. Something happened here that really upset me. The Division Surgeon had issued malaria pills to my medical platoon with instructions that they be taken prior to deployment. The part of the instructions that did not get out was that they had to be taken with food. Soldiers took them right away and as we road to the airport many of them were sick. It was not a good way to start a real world deployment.

Things were not going well at the airport either. The computer at the departure shack would not accept our manifest

disk so the Air Force wanted to board the planes and take off without a manifest. Having served in the 101st when the airplane crashed at Gander, I was not going to allow that. In addition, they did not want us to break down small arms ammunition to each plane, as procedures called for. The reason given was that it would take too long. I vetoed that idea also and between myself, my XO and the S-3, we made sure the right things happened prior to departure.

Two other points need to be made about our preparations to deploy. In each case the EDRE deception hindered the Battalion's capability once it was deployed. The first concerns our professional officer filler system (PROFIS) doctor. The PROFIS doctor was not alerted during the EDRE by the Battalion because he did not normally go on EDREs. In the middle of the night on 19-20 December no one thought to call him and as a consequence he did not deploy with us. This was a terrible mistake which could have had serious consequences had it not been for the feeble resistance of the PDF. When we arrived in Panama I asked about the PROFIS doctor and I was told that we would be covered when necessary. Fortunately it was never necessary, but that was not a very good answer. I later learned in talking with the PROFIS doctor assigned to the Battalion that he had been alerted for deployment by the Division Surgeon, but was later told to stand down as he would not deploy. That is a decision that I would have strongly contested.

The second issue was less serious. It concerns Class A

Agents and ordering officers. As part of normal DRF preparation Class A Agents and ordering officers are designated throughout the Battalion. Upon deployment the Adjutant has the responsibility to go to Finance and pick up a predetermined amount of cash. This cash can then be used for official expenditures as needed by the unit and it can further be hand receipted to companies because they have the CLASS A Agents designated with orders. We did not draw any cash because it was an EDRE. We had a need for money throughout Just Cause, primarily in the cash for weapons program and for civilian contract services. In the initial days of the operation getting cash from Brigade HQs was a constant problem. In both of these cases, the EDRE deception contributed to problems which would not have occurred if the correct information had been disseminated as low as Battalion Commanders.

Airplanes (C-141s) started departing at approximately 0600 hours on 20 December from Monterey International Airport. Major Fey was on the first C-141, I was on the 2d, the XO, CSM and S-3 Air brought up the rear. My last instructions to the XO and S-3 Air were to make sure that everything and everybody got on an airplane. Prior to departure we were told that Torrijos-Tocumen Airfield was secure. This was good news but it did not make a long flight any easier. We stopped at Kelly AFB to refuel and the soldiers got a chance to eat and stretch. I called the EOC at Ft Ord to verify that the arrival airfield was still secure; it was. We reboarded the C-141's at dusk.

As we approached the coast of Panama the pilot blacked out the airplane and we landed at 2300 hours. The airfield was black except for some chem lights we could see in the distance. We started walking that way and as we did an M551 Sheridan came screaming by. All I could think was how unsafe that was because he was blacked out too. I assumed he had night vision equipment, otherwise we were in trouble. About that same time we were met by someone from the first plane load which, by design, had all of the guides on it. Normally, in training exercises, host nation guides were available to assist arriving planeloads in movement to their assembly areas. This was not the case in Panama. But these same exercises stressed rapid movement from the airfield, and the S-3 and Scout Platoon Leader improvised and quickly moved arriving planeloads to covered and concealed positions.

I linked up with the S-3 who had found a spot for the command post. It was the Eastern Airlines Cargo office. The radio telephone operators (RTO's) began setting up communications and the S-3 and I went to check in at Brigade HQ's. We found it, checked in and got a location to move to in the morning. The rest of the Battalion came in as the night progressed and we were all closed in by 0230 hours on 21 December.

The deployment had been anything but smooth, but I would say that considering the circumstances it went very well. Nothing ever goes according to plan and through the efforts of a lot of people making things happen, it got done and got done well. Although the EDRE to Camp Pendleton caused some problems it also

served as a rehearsal of sorts for the deployment to Panama. It provided training for us on rapid deployment, air movement, night attack, and live fire assault. The EDRE It was also very useful in that the Battalion had just received a COHORT package of 252 new soldiers in May of that year and had not conducted an EDRE prior to the deployment to Pendleton.

MA BELL

After occupying an assembly area in the vicinity of Torrijos-Tocumen Airfield on the outskirts of Panama City for approximately 24 hours the battalion moved to Rio Hato for follow-on operations. The battalion relieved the two Ranger battalions that had secured Rio Hato during the initial assault at H-Hour.

On 22 December we received a mission to secure the Panama Defense Force(PDF) Garrison at Santiago. We originally planned this operation as a battalion air assault that would include air lifting artillery and mortars into position to support the attack on the PDF compound. On the 23d of December the plan was modified and scaled down.

Prior to our operation, which was to take place at night, a Special Forces(SF) company assisted by the Battalion Scout Platoon moved by helicopter to Santiago during the daytime. Supported by an AC-130 they convinced the garrison to surrender. Company C, 3-27 Infantry, which had been on standby to support the SF company operation, was immediately moved by helicopter to

secure the garrison. The entire operation was accomplished with a small amount of fire because of some light resistance within the compound, but without casualties on either side.

This operation became a prototype for an operation that the battalion would conduct five more times over the next week. We called it Operation Ma Bell, because the SF used the phone to call the PDF and ask them if they wanted to surrender. It was given that name by Major Gil Perez the Commander of A Company 1-7 Special Forces Group. Gil and his company worked with the Battalion for two subsequent operations until we moved further west and conducted the same type of operation independently or with other Special Forces units.

After the success of the Santiago operation we were immediately given a mission to secure the PDF Garrison at Chitre. Chitre is the capital of Herrera Province in western Panama. Our orders called for the battalion to secure the PDF Garrison on the 24th of December. This meant that we had less than 12 hours before the execution of the air assault's pickup zone (PZ).

A Company 3-27 Infantry, commanded by Cpt Ray Millen, was selected to conduct this mission. The operations order was briefed at 2200 hours on 23 December. The order was accompanied by a hand written execution matrix; otherwise it was all verbal. The air mission brief (AMB) was conducted at 0200 hours later that night and was attended by the aviation Battalion Commander, LTC Dave Pickett, and Cpt Millen.

The aviation unit, 4/228 Aviation Battalion provided 6 UH-60

Blackhawks with the seats out for the mission. This allowed us to put 20 soldiers in each helicopter and accomplish the air assault in one lift. This was ideal as we only wanted to use the landing zone (LZ) one time.

PZ time was 0400 hours. The Company Commander was on the 1st aircraft and I was on the 2nd. For this operation I took an RTO on the Battalion net so that I could communicate with the Company Commander, a TACSAT operator so that I could talk to Brigade HQs, the Intel NCO, and the tactical air control party (TACP) officer. The TACP was my link to the AC-130 which was supporting the operation. The AC-130 was supposed to be on station from 0500 until 1100, and throughout the operation it was a comforting feeling to see and hear it circling overhead.

All of the lift helicopters had arrived at Rio Hato at 0200 hours. This allowed the company to load early and also practice unloading. We lifted off exactly on time and were accompanied by attack helicopters to the LZ which was approximately 2 kilometers from the objective (PDF Compound(quartel)). (See Annex 3.) The Company Commander organized his company and moved to an assembly area away from the LZ, still under the cover of darkness. Now we waited for the SF to make their call.

The procedure for Ma Bell on the Chitre operation was as follows. At 0500 hours the SF Company Commander and approximately 20 soldiers from his company along with a squad from my Scout Platoon flew in an MH-60 into the airfield at Chitre, which was about 3 kilometers NE of the town. Airfields

were normally not operational at this time of the morning so there were no complications from civilians in the area. The SF unit along with my scouts would secure the terminal building, gain entry and use the telephone. The Commander called the PDF Garrison and asked to speak to the commander of the quartel.

The commander was told that an AC-130 Gunship was overhead, which he could no doubt hear. He was also told that an Infantry unit was waiting to assault and he probably had heard the helicopters which brought it into the area. The quartel commander was then given the conditions for surrender which were to gather all personnel in the courtyard of the quartel, secure all weapons in the arms room, and come to a designated spot to be picked up for a helicopter ride. If the commander agreed, he would be picked up and together he and Major Perez would fly over the quartel to insure everything was in order. If it was, the helicopter would land in the quartel courtyard and the SF troops and my scouts would make a quick security sweep to ensure everything was still OK. Then I would get a call on the radio and the Infantry Company would move into and thoroughly secure the quartel.

If the commander of the quartel did not want to surrender a different course was taken. The AC-130 would be directed to fire one round outside the perimeter of the quartel. Another phone call would be made. If the commander still did not want to surrender he would be told that the next round would land inside the quartel, and the exact location of impact would be given.

The AC-130 would then fire the round and another phone call would be made. If the commander still elected to hold out he would be told that the Infantry was going to assault. In Chitre, the PDF Commander elected to surrender on the first phone call.

The PDF commander drove himself to a spot outside town where he was picked up by the SF unit in their helicopter. The personnel in the quartel were assembled in the courtyard, everything looked straight, so the helicopter landed. The security sweep was conducted and no shots were fired. At approximately 0700 the call came on the radio for the Infantry to move in. The Company Commander moved his unit cross country and met the Battalion Scouts outside the town.

As we reached the outskirts of Chitre, we were met by a civilian who was very excited. He wanted to give us information on the location of Dignity Battalion members. Dignity Battalions were paramilitary or militia units formed and armed by Noriega to do thug work whenever it was needed. This informant particularly wanted to warn us of a house on a hill along our route where we might be ambushed. Cpt Millen ensured that this location was cleared, to include searching the house, prior to us moving through the area.

As we approached the quartel people began to come out into the streets. They were waving and cheering and kids were running along trying to talk to the soldiers. It was reminiscent of the scenes of US troops liberating Paris. These people were genuinely glad that we were there. Once inside the quartel work

became more serious. The SF helicopter was already gone and on it were any PDF personnel wanted by the new government and US Forces. These personnel were identified on what was called the Black List, which was constantly updated and used throughout our time in Panama.

At this point the Company Commander and I were breaking new ground. We had not trained to receive the surrender of a military garrison. While the Company Commander was securing the perimeter of the compound I talked to the officer in charge. This was done through an interpreter who was a soldier from A/3-27. The wealth of Spanish speaking soldiers in the unit proved to be a key asset throughout Just Cause. I cannot say enough about the job they did. Not only did they make operating easier, but they demonstrated our commonality with the Panamanian people which was good for relations between the civilian populace and the US military.

The garrison commander was on the Black List so he had been evacuated to Rio Hato in the SF helicopter. He apparently did not want to surrender but the other officers convinced him to do so. I requested to talk to the next senior officer present, who the SF had identified. To say the least, he was extremely nervous and his expression was one of fear. I assured him that he had nothing to fear; we did not intend to harm anyone as long as they followed instructions. In Cpt Millen's presence, he was instructed on the procedures for the surrender of the garrison. He agreed and the process began.

The PDF were basically treated as POWs except that they were not tied or blindfolded. Cpt Millen divided his unit by platoons in order to maintain the security of the compound perimeter, search the compound, and inventory the arms room and evacuate weapons. The POWs were separated into groups of officers and enlisted and held in secured areas. One at a time they were taken to their rooms to search personal belongings and open locked cabinets, drawers and rooms. As areas were searched the soldiers were returned to a separate holding area. It was not our intent to destroy the compound but to find contraband and weapons, and then turn the garrison over to the new government and help a new police force stand up.

While the building search was going on, the Intel NCO who was part of my command and control element, with assistance from the company, inventoried the arms room. That day in Chitre, the entire process took about five hours, to include searching the grounds and all buildings on the compound. In the end the company processed approximately 120 POWs and 1872 weapons. This garrison, like all the others we secured, had been armed to the teeth, and only a small percentage (less than 10%) of the weapons were pistols. The majority were assault rifles and light machine guns of various types.

Around noon, a helicopter landed unannounced and an officer from the SOUTHCOM political affairs office introduced himself. He had representatives from the new government on board and also the man who was to be the new garrison commander. They desired a

ceremony on the front steps of the compound headquarters to install the new garrison commander. People were allowed inside the compound, something which obviously had not happened in a long time. The representative from the new government and the new commander both spoke. The ceremony was symbolic of the end of the Noriega regime and the installation of the government that the people had elected the previous in May. The people who gathered for the brief ceremony cheered and clapped throughout the speeches. We were thanked repeatedly and the government delegation departed leaving the new commander in charge. Shortly thereafter we were visited by the Division and Brigade Commander. As a conclusion to the operation they were briefed on the events of the day.

Frequently, whenever we conducted this type of operation, people immediately began coming to the perimeter of the compound and offering information. In Chitre, we were soon told that the new commander was not to be trusted, but there was nothing we could do about it except keep an eye on him. We also routinely got information on arms caches and the location of Dignity Battalion members. These reports were accurate on some occasions but were normally false. We had the impression that it was an easy way for a person to cause trouble for someone he did not like.

Late in the afternoon of 24 December, I was recalled to Rio Hato to plan another MA Bell operation which we executed in Las Tablas on Christmas day. The Company remained in Chitre for only

two days and was extracted on the 26th when the entire Battalion moved further west in Panama. This bothered everyone in the Battalion's chain of command. The new government was just taking hold and the civilian population strongly expressed the fear that, when we left, there would be reprisals against those who had provided information or even come out into the street to cheer. Nevertheless we moved out of Chitre, however I did leave platoons in Santiago and Las Tablas for approximately one week when the Battalion moved west.

The 3d Battalion 27th Infantry conducted Operation Ma Bell four more times during Operation Just Cause. In addition to Las Tablas the Battalion secured PDF garrisons in Boquette, Changuinola, and Bocas del Toro. All together these air assault missions resulted in over 3600 weapons captured, over 700 POWs, and the seizure of 6 PDF garrisons and the PDF Jungle School. This was accomplished without casualties on either side and minimal collateral damage to Panamanian property.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the deception of portraying the deployment to Panama as an EDRE helped with OPSEC, it denied valuable and accurate information from key decision makers at battalion level. It is not a good assumption that if you call a deployment an EDRE that leaders will make the same decisions that they would for a real world deployment. METT-T is an important part of every mission analysis and the best and most information available must

be given to decision makers.

The EDRE to Camp Pendleton greatly increased the Battalion's readiness to deploy rapidly. This type of training must be done frequently. Also, it was clear that the more preparations that are conducted during DRF assumption the easier it will be to actually deploy. When a short notice deployment occurs there will not be time for the DRB to do preparation for overseas movement (POM) checks after N-Hour has been declared. For the Just Cause deployment the units in the DRB were moved faster than the N-Hour sequence called for.

The air assault operation is a highly perishable skill which requires constant practice. By the time we left Panama the Battalion was better trained to conduct air assaults than at any other time during my command. This was primarily due to the frequency that we were required to conduct air assaults while in Panama. The AMB was a critical part of the process and it worked best when the Company XO and air mission commander attended. The Bn S-2, FSO and S-4 were also key players with the Bn S-3 Air bringing it all together under the Bn Commander or S-3's guidance.

Some other things important to producing good air assaults were rehearsing loading and unloading of 20 PAXs with the seats out. We started doing this as part of DRF preparation after our Panama experience. We practiced it with and without rucksacks. The use of Chalk Leader manifests (one is given to the PZ control officer), destination cards (PZ name and grid coordinate given to

the pilot), and individual PAX cards (same info as destination card but kept by soldier in case he is bumped) all reduce confusion on the PZ. Finally the marking of LZs is a tremendous navigation aid if it is possible.

Light Infantry is exactly that. The Battalion was already light with its authorized 35 HMMWVs. When we deployed with 10 of them I thought we would have mobility and logistics problems, but with a little ingenuity and initiative within the Staff we always had transportation when we needed it. That is not to say we did not walk a lot. We did, but when we needed to move long distances fast we could. We often used commercial or confiscated vehicles and the Class A Agent and his cash enabled this to happen. Light Infantry has traditionally been proud of its ability to live off of the land and be self sufficient. Although logistic support was there in Panama with us, it was also light. We relied heavily on our own initiative and innovativeness to get the job done.

Briefly written and verbal FRAGOs were the norm during Operation Just Cause. The Battalion seldom operated as a whole, but as independent platoons and companies. Thorough and intensive staff and orders group training, tough and demanding field exercises, and small unit SOPs allowed minimal but adequate orders to be prepared and utilized when preparation time was scarce.

Flexibility, initiative, and decentralized execution characterized our operations in Panama. More often than not I was out of Communications with my company commanders. I could talk to

them only on the rare occasion when they had a TACSAT. This was also true at platoon level where they were often out of range of the company headquarters. Light Infantry must train to execute in a decentralized manner and independent of higher headquarters. Furthermore, there are many missions that we will be given that we have not trained for. An example is the civil affairs type mission we did standing up the local governments in Panama, ensuring basic services were provided, and providing law and order. In some cases I had platoon leaders who were counterparts to the mayor of a large city. In effect they were the mayor. Leaders who are used to doing the unexpected, operating independently, and exercising initiative will be more successful in a Just Cause type of operation.

FRAGO 1 TO OPORD 8 90

MAP SERIES:

ANNEX 1

TIME ZONE USED THROUGHOUT:

TASK ORGANIZATION: SEE PARA 3 (EXECUTION MATRIX) (DTB)

1. SITUATION:

a. Enemy Situation: See Annex A

b. Friendly Situation:

(1) Higher: 82D ABN IS 2D BDE'S HIGHER; 80E OF 82D IN ZONE; RGR BN IN ZONE

(2) Left: 5-21 IN AO1; 0/0, AO's 3, THEN 5.

(3) Right:

(4) Front: 2-27 IN AO2, 0/0, AO 6.

(5) Rear: OMITTED

(6) 2D BDE: CONDUCT RELIEF IN PLACE OPS; REINFORCE EXISTING OPS; LOCATE CACHES; NEUTRAL.

c. Bde Cdr's Intent: GET OFF THE AIRPLANES FAST; BE READY TO FIGHT AND MOVE FAST. 2E PDF

2. MISSION: TO 3-07 IN AIRLANDS BY CIVIL 202023-202030 DELL PANAMA

TIME) AT TOCUMEN (7804) AND OCCUPYS AA CROW OR WREN; ON ORDER OCCUPY AO4, ORIENTED EAST; BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT OFFENSIVE OPS TOWARD PANAMA CITY

3. EXECUTION:

a. Bn Cdr's Intent:

MOVE FAST INTO AA'S; MAKE MAX USE OF NOB'S AND QUARTERING PART D&W.

b. Concept of Operation (See overlay): This is a 3 Phase operation. Phase I: AIRLAND AND OCCUPY AA CROW OR AA WREN.

Phase II: MOVE ONE COMPANY TO AO4, ESTABLISH BLOCKING POSITIONS TO THE EAST.

Phase III: CONDUCT OFFENSIVE OPS TOWARD PANAMA CITY.

(1) Maneuver: (See Execution Matrix)

(2) Fires: (See Fire Support Matrix)

(3) IEW: OMITTED

(4) Engineer effort is (1) mobility; (3) survivability; (2) counter mobility. Priority of effort is to CTM, then BTM.

c. Subunit missions (See Execution Matrix)

d. Coordinating Instructions:

(1) MOFF level 0; ~~be prepared to leave with~~

(2) ADA: White/Yellow/Red//Hold/Free/Tight; priority of effort is to ~~then~~; then ~~then~~

(3) Uniform is: ~~RUCK, NO SOP~~; SOFT CAPS IN RUCK. TOP FLAP; DROP HAWK GEAR.

(4) WEAPONS OILED PRIOR TO LEAVING FT ORD.

(5) ROE IN EFFECT (WHITE CARD); MINIMAL FORCE TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION; MAX FORCE TO PROTECT OUR FORCE.

(6) EXPECT LOOTING BY PANAMANIAN'S; DON'T SHOOT LOOTERS.

(7) NO SOUVINIERS

(8) STRICT ACCOUNTABILITY OF OUR WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT AND CAPTURED ENEMY WEAPONS.

(9) EXPECT PRESS

(10) BN CO IS AUTHORITY TO CONFISCATE VEHICLES.

(11) DISARM EVERYONE, TO INCLUDE POLICE; CONFISCATE POLICE VEHICLES. TELL ARMED PERSONNEL TO HASTY DROP WEAPONS. IF HESITATION, SHOOT.

(12) BE PREPARED TO USE PDF COMPOUNDS AS PW COMPOUNDS.

(13) BOTTOM LINE: ASSIST PANAMANIAN'S.

(16) INSTRUCT PERSONNEL IN:

- ALTO - HALT
- BAHAM TWO ARMA - DROP YOUR WEAPON
- MANOS ARRIBA - HANDS UP

(17) ALL CANTEENS TOPPED OFF PRIOR TO MANIFEST CALL

(18) CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT AND VEHICLES USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES ARE LEGITIMATE TARGETS.

a. General:

F. Command and Signal:

a. Command:

(2) Commander at: *TOC* XO at: *COMBAT* S3 at: *TOC*

7. Signal:

(1) Current SDI _____ and CNV _____ in effect.

(2) CPERKIDS; WHALE - BDE CO ON GROUND

- WHALE 1 - DRFL : ~~DOGF~~ HOUND - ELEMENTS IN AA
- WHALE 2 - " 2 : :
- WHALE 3 - " 3 : :

התאחדות המורים והמורות

HUTCHISON
LTC

— 222 —

FEY

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ANNEXED (see REFERENCE)

SECRET

10 - Operations Overlay

[illegible]

1.5.5 Support Matrix

[illegible]

(REMEMBER: Copies of En FRAGs do not go forward of company CP's; destroy before departing on mission).

Appendix 1, to Annex V, FRAGS __ to 9999 __-__

[illegible]

ANNEX 2

INFORMATION TO BE BRIEFED TO ALL 7TH ID SOLDIERS DEPLOYING ON OPERATION JUST CAUSE

Rules of Engagement (ROE)

1. Use minimum force to accomplish the mission
2. Use sufficient force to protect US forces
3. No unnecessary destruction of property
4. Disarm everyone(includes Deni Stations(Panamanian police stations)), confiscate all weapons/arms rooms
5. Do not allow looting but do not shoot looters
6. Bn Cdr must approve confiscation of vehicles
7. Bde Cdr must approve use of riot control agents

Rules of Conduct

1. Soldiers are professional and disciplined
2. Do not take anything as a souvenir
3. Do not alienate populace, ie make more enemies
4. Avoid the press; can tell them:
 - a. We are there to protect US interests
 - b. We are there to restore law and order
 - c. We are there to assist the Panamanian people

Other Info

1. Estimate that 5% of the PDF will fight
2. PDF compounds will be used as POW compounds
3. Evacuate PDF dead and wounded expeditiously
4. New government stands up at 202200DEC891

ANNEX 3

AMA 1:50,000

EDITION 1-AMS
EDICIÓN 1-AMS

